Imperialism.

Webster's briefest definition of imperialism is a sovereignty or people ambitions of empire. He remarks further that empire carries with it the idea of a vast and complicated government.

In political affairs it is common for an opposing party to give a name to an adversary or to the party to which he belongs. Thus the name "loco focr" was imparted to the Jacksonian democrats and the name "mugwump" to the new party which has stood out against what they called "bossism" in existing political organizations.

At first the word chosen is apropos, but in time it becomes an honored name of the men associated, accomplish a good work in the interest of the people or of humanity. Just at this crisis in the affairs of our nation it is uncertain what the newspapers mean by imperialism and more uncertain as yet to what groupings of men or perhaps men and women they design to apply the condemnatory epithet.
now if I belong to a group of people, who are and always have been Republican through and through, strongly leaning to an universal democracy, it is not fair to call me an imperialist nor charge upon my group an ambition for empire. The word "empire" itself is not abominous, but it is misapplied to us who have no idea of looking to the acquirement of large possessions or of introducing a restless and complicated form of government. Our government has extended its domain within my recollection it has pushed its way across the continent to take in an immense body of land limited by Mexico on the south and the Pacific Ocean on the west. This came as the result of a settlement with Mexico at the end of a successful war. To the new territories thus acquired we have given the same form of government and the same rights and privileges which the older states already possessed, that is to say, a government "of the people, by the people, and for the people." Later on Alaska was acquired by purchase from Russia. Notice that the
Russian form of government has not been maintained and that though the territory
had in it Russians, Alasks and Indians
constituting the majority of its population
yet little by little the institutions of the United
States have gone there. There is no czarism
as kingdom in fact we dynastic form of
government dreamed of within the limits
of that territory. It is first a Territory
organized as we organize it, and when there
shall be sufficient population the right
kind the Territory will be replaced by a State
which will hence for its inhabitants the
same civic rights which the peoples of
other States possess. Of the acquisition
of New Mexico and Arizona in the peace
convention after war, and the obtaining
of Alaska by purchase, these extending
our domain, he imperialism then indeed
nine tenths of our people are imperialists
and we may accept the term to properly
descriptive of those citizens who constantly
desire to see republican principles extended.
We disclaim, however, every spirit of
aggression or desire of conquest. This
is what our opponents mean to imply.
to us. It is what the Spaniards allege concerning our nation. For example, they say that we went to war in order to acquire Cuba, Porto Rico & the Philippines, that it was intended as a war of conquest from the beginning, and that the claim of "humanity" was a mere pretext. The vast majority of thinking men in this country understand fully that the desire of conquest was not the object or in any way the propelling cause of the war. Our administration to-day and our representatives at Paris would indignantly deny that the spirit of aggression and conquest had animated them or inspired any of their proceedings. True, the war came as the direct result of long years of cruelty, oppression, extortion and attempts at the extermination of peoples who were faced by Spain herself into resistance. As Lafayette with his battalions came to our assistance when our people were struggling for independence and freedom from oppression, so our nation came to the aid of the Cubans in their last extremity declaring war. Spain accepted war rather than yield to her struggling
people the rights & privileges to which they were entitled. Now, simply as incidents of the war Porto Rico & the Philippines come under our military control. The question is what is it best, under these circumstances to do. A writer well says, 'The bottom fact of the situation is that Spain is no longer in reality the possessor, nor capable of becoming the possessor of any of the property in doubt.' What are called the insurgents in the Philippines correspond precisely to those who strove for liberty in Cuba. They had the same prolonged and hopeless oppression to meet and contend against. They desired our many by land cooperation in the same vicinity of Havana and they have expressed a desire to be free, to have a government like our Republic. Why should they not have a government of their choice? The answer to this is, that the people of the Philippines are not sufficiently advanced in knowledge and education to govern themselves, therefore it is better for them and for us that we take simply a coaling station in the archipelago and surrender to Spain all the old Spanish possessions.
as-called in that region. Even this kind disposition to make restoration to the Spanish power to render Dewey's and the success of Merritt's command utterly futile, would be of no value to Spain. She could not reconquer the islands without some extraordinary help from outside. Will those then who tremble at the idea for territorial extension advocate a war against the Philippines inaugurate our generous helpers, and late allies in order to free Spain again in her pride possession of the island territory? One writer says, "We have nothing whatever to do with the Philippines. The condition of the inhabitants, whether good or bad is none of our business." As Americans we cannot accept such a statement for a moment. Our enemy and our enemy are there and the inhabitants of the islands are as a rule, our friends, and looking to us to maintain the deliverance which we have already effected.

It is quite another question whether we shall keep these islands and annex
them to our present domain. I would favor dealing with the Philippines precisely as Congress and the President promised to deal with the Cubans, viz.: to bear a strong hand of support and encouragement and protection, if need be, till a stable government of the people, by the people and for the people shall be permanently established. In the light of every moral obligation I believe this will be the best course to pursue. But to give back the Philippines to the merciless rule of the Spanish dynasty would be cruel, unjust, and make our struggles for humanity appear to the world both cowardly and partial. Again, the same author before quoted says truly, “Having caused the United States a war expenditure of nearly $300,000,000, they refused to consent without fighting to the just demands of this country. Spain has now lost forever and beyond possibility of recovery, the property and the revenue which she pledged for payment of debts.” These are facts which our congressmen have carefully considered.
to Spain. Porto Rico & the Philippines would be a strange settlement. It would be quite unwise for the conqueror conquered in place of them. The conquerors giving an immense reward to the nation that was in the wrong, and start to finish. Our commission could not consider such a proposition in view of the proper demand that Spain should bear the expenses of the war. We required that conduct on the part of Mexico, but as the could not pay in money, the ceded her territory. Bismarck took Alsace and Lorraine and large sums besides from France at the close of the Franco-Prussian war. Our settlement, of course, should be just and right, and not excessive. The American mind does not sympathize in any way with the so-called rights of dynasties to hold and govern peoples against the interests and the will of the governed. In this view the Spanish nation has no further hold upon the Philippines any more than she has upon Cuba and Porto Rico. If she even has such a hold, it will be because we are driven into.
weakness, unlikelihood, folly by this sudden essay, raised for party purposes, of "imperialism". One great man recently declares that he would rather have the corrupter rulers elected than submit to the imperialism which would lift a Roosevelt to the gubernatorial chair of New York. The young man has for years been the very embodiment of uprightness in conduct and in government. He has had the courage of his convictions. He has been a wonderful patriot in times of danger and he stands today not for imperialism in any true sense of the word but for the Republic and its best interests, and for humanity. He is not unwilling that our Republican principles should be extended in any way, he is very unwilling to lend a helping hand to peoples of the earth who desire to be free to govern themselves and enjoy such opportunities, rights, privileges and other blessings as he himself has enjoyed.

For many years our nation has played the part of asylum of the
Oppressed coming to us from other shores. Until this time many of our cities have become congested by foreign populations. Some parts of the country have lost the Anglo-Saxon element almost altogether. In New England there has been a migration for Canada so great that the French Canadians are taking the old farms, the stores, the shops, and the factories as far as the laboring element is concerned. Peoples from Russia, Poland, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, Norway and Sweden have their sections of abode where they retain their native language and in places are continuing for the right to preserve intact the foreign tongue. Those who opposed extension of territory declare that we must first assimilate these varied elements and secure a homogeneous nation before we can think of the interests of other people nations. They say that we have plenty to do at home to bring our people up by educational methods to a reasonable stage of civilization. There is considerable reason in this view but it is after all a narrow philosophy.
Any operations which cause these different individuals to mingle together are helpful. The war with Spain, notwithstanding its heavy cloud of depression which resulted from sickness and death, brought together our citizens of every caste and condition. It broke up old enmities, and started new centers of unity and fellowship. The patriotic feeling was never stronger or more nearly universal than now. The going up to Alaska by multitudes, in search of gold had a similar effect. Rich men have had the opportunity and incentive to give largely and generously for the relief of suffering, and poor men have found their places beside the well to do. War, however, and gold seeking are not the best things. New territories in times of peace will open up new avenues for enterprise, and, under the providence of God we may see in our new acquisitions a relief from emigres and dilletante, the unworked, and underemployed poor, and the laborers who find it necessary to come in against the rich and the uncertain.
With an enlarged field there will be more garden spots and richer facilities for occupancy and cultivation. It may be optimistic but I feel as though our restless population which is ready to rush to every new found possession will be relieved of all congestion and if the have properly educated and trained when children will, under God's providence, become a blessing to themselves and to their posterity under the enlarged opportunities which have been brought to us by this late war. It is not imperialism which we would forswear, but the essential enlargement caused by the proper solution of world problems that could not be avoided.